

# HAMPTON VA

## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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## Hampton names economic development director

May 21, 2013 – Leonard Sledge, director of economic development for the College of William and Mary, has been named Hampton's director of economic development, effective June 17.

Sledge, a Hampton resident, is currently serving as a board member of the Economic Development Authority. At William and Mary, he has facilitated public-private-university partnerships that strengthen the university and contribute to local, regional and state economic development.



Prior to joining William and Mary, he worked extensively in workforce development, both at the Virginia Community College System and in Tempe, Ariz. He began his career in industry, managing front-line manufacturing operations for several computer chip manufacturers.

City Manager Mary Bunting noted, "Leonard grew up in Hampton and, like all of us, has a great love for this city. I believe his combination of experience, education and passion will serve the department and the community extremely well."

Hampton's economic development director provides recommendations on overall economic development strategies to enhance the tax base of the city and strengthen the employment base for residents. He also manages and directs economic development programs that expand the city's tax base and creates employment opportunities for citizens by focusing on business/job recruitment, development, redevelopment, expansion and retention.

Sledge holds two undergraduate degrees – a BS from Morehouse College and a bachelor of industrial engineering from Georgia Tech. He holds an MBA from the University of Phoenix.

Former Economic Development Director James Eason retired on June 29, 2012, after eight years leading the city's economic efforts. Eason also was mayor of Hampton from 1982-1988. The city recruited nationally and regionally for candidates. Business representatives were included on the interview panel. The department was led by Mike Yaskowsky, senior development manager, in the interim.

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